

the Socialist

Issue 1202 10-16 November 2022 formerly



- Support the strikes for inflation-proof pay rises
 - No cuts. Full funding for public services
 - Strike together. Kick the Tories out
- No trust in Starmer's Labour. Build a new mass workers' party



COME TO SOCIALISM 2022

EDITORIAL socialistparty.org.uk

10-16 November 2022

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Editorial

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"The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways: the point is to change it."

Workers' action can force out Tories and build a political alternative

Socialist Party

ritain's economy is already in a recession, which the Bank of England predicts will last two years. Inflation is hitting a forty-year high. The hike in interest rates is the biggest for 30 years, leaving millions worrying about how they will pay their mortgages and their credit cards. More than a quarter of adults in the UK are now reliant on their credit cards to buy food. Meanwhile, Sunak and Hunt are

preparing an autumn statement which is said to include upwards of £33 billion of cuts to public spending. That is on top of the huge real-terms cuts to every public service already taking place as a result of inflation.

Chancellor Hunt's description of "eye-wateringly difficult" times ahead doesn't apply to multi-millionaires like him and prime minister Sunak, however. In fact, the pay of the chief executives of Britain's biggest 'FTSE 100' companies soared by 23% this year, to an average of £3.9 million! Meanwhile, the same chief executives are demanding their workforces accept real-terms pay

British capitalism is in crisis, but it is not the capitalist elite who are suffering as a result, it is the workingclass majority. If we don't fight back, the bosses and the Tory government will be prepared to drive our pay and living standards even further into the But as hundreds of thousands of

workers have already discovered in 2022, collective action can win. Labour Research reports that more than fifty groups of workers have been able to win inflation-beating pay rises, by taking, or sometimes just by threatening, strike action. Overall, they show a clear correlation between being prepared to strike and winning better pay awards.

As we go to press, the Royal College of Nursing has voted for strike action in Britain for the time in its history (see page 7). Other health unions, civil servants, teachers and other workers are also in the process: the Tories, but are also angry that the of balloting. The trade union movement can defeat Sunak's 'austerity on : Starmer's 'New Labour' party which

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November issue includes..



out of office.

The potential exists for the TUC to organise the biggest wave of coordinated strike action this century If the TUC fails to give a lead, all those trade unions who want to fight should work together to coordinate the action.

However, while 2022 has been the vear in which the necessity of workers' collective action has been demonstrated to a new generation, the working class does not yet have any collective voice in the political arena. Millions are desperate to get rid of only 'alternative' on offer is Sir Keir

has made abundantly clear that, like Sunak and Hunt, it would do the bidding of the 'markets' in government. Ultimately, that means doing the bidding of the capitalist elite, who are motivated not by the good of society as a whole but by maximising their own profits.

A mass movement forcing the Tories out would be a victory, but would clearly not end the need for a struggle to defend workers' interests. There is an urgent need to start building a political alternative that will fight for those interests. A start needs to be made at the next general election with trade union and socialist candidates standing against pro-capitalist Labour candidates - so that the battle that has begun in the workplaces will also have a voice in parliament.

BRITISH CAPITALISM AND TORY PARTY DISINTEGRATION **SOCIALISM 2022**

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PAULA MITCHELL

10-16 November 2022

ell over one and a half million workers are currently engaged in strike action or are balloting; a movement is building that could drive the crisis-ridden To ries out and fight to end the cost-of living crisis.

10-16 November 2022

In the midst of this strike wave, on 2 November, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), the leading body of all the trade unions, organised a lobby of parliament and a rally, under the hanner "General Election Now"

The Socialist Party, along with the National Shop Stewards Network. had campaigned for this to be a mass midweek 'Tories Out' demonstration.

The trade unions have gained enormous authority, as an organised expression of anger at the government and the heavy price it is inflicting on working-class and middle-class people, and with the potential power to change the situation. 2 November could have been an important step in building that fight.

Unfortunately, this opportunity was missed, with low-key lobbying of MPs by groups of trade unionists and an evening rally. To its credit, the rail union RMT additionally organised a lunchtime protest against the threat of new anti-trade union laws.

In the rally, trade union leaders laid out the appalling situation facing working-class people. They pledged a fight, but unfortunately mostly only in general terms. Paul Nowak, incoming TUC general secretary for example, rightly said we should "not just demand better, but fight for better". Outgoing general secretary Frances O'Grady said: "We will fight for our class". But they made no clear intention to coordinate strike action to win "better"

While Mark Serwotka, of civil service union PCS, said that they would talk to other unions to coordinate strike dates, none of the leaders concretely responded to the call from a teacher who said: "People want a general strike!"

Calls were made for a general election and for a government that will invest in public services, build homes for all, bring in a £15-an-hour minimum wage and tax the rich Speaking on behalf of Unite general secretary Sharon Graham, Unite national lead officer Onay Kasab called for the democratic nationalisation of public services, with no compensation to the wealthy shareholders.

Only a handful of the speakers even hinted that Sir Keir Starmer's New Labour party doesn't agree with that programme. Io Grady of the University and College Union warned Labour against "tough decisions". Mick Lynch of the RMT and Matt Wrack of the Fire Brigades Un ion both demanded of Labour politicians that they stand with workers responding to the sacking of shadow minister Sam Tarry after he did precisely that.

Onay Kasab spelt out the role of the Labour council in Coventry against its own bin workers, spending £4 million of council tax-payers' money on a strike-breaking operation, and victimising union rep Pete Randle. He said the politicians have been asked which side are you on and the answer has come back: It's not ours. "Our fight is in our hands'

Mick Lynch went on to say: "There

Workers are fighting back, but TUC lobby a missed opportunity

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as the organised working class has is saying that we cannot rely on the got to identify with the needs of the ruling class to do us a favour. "Our working people... So we can have a : emancipation is in our hands... Every general election, but when we get a : worker out, everyone in solidarity party that is supposed to represent: and let's change this society for the the organised working class and the poor people of this country... they've got to commit to a programme in favour of working people, without any reservations whatsoever."

The Socialist Party argues that one of the best ways to apply that pressure is for trade unionists and socialists to stand as candidates, so that a Starmer government is forced to 'look over its left shoulder'. Trade union leaders like Mick who draw these conclusions about Starmer's Labour should take the necessary steps to form a new party that does precisely commit to a programme in favour of working people.

Taking up Frances O'Grady's response to anti-trade union laws "see vou in court" – Onav Kasab declared: "Never mind see you in court - see you on the picket line!" Mick

Every politician that we put in there : Lynch similarly took up that point, better." Unfortunately, the mild lobby of parliament did not match up to the fight that is necessary.

Throughout the day, Socialist Party members discussed with workers at tending and gave out leaflets that put a clear way forward: Tories out; coordinate strike action; for a new work

Socialist Students members also gathered, to support and link up with trade unionists



RMT members spoke to the Socialist

TRADE UNIONS

'A proper strike, every union the same dav'

"This protest is against the antitrade union laws. The Tories want to introduce minimum service levels. It should be the minimum right of an individual to withdraw your labour, It's a last resort, but if we're not allowed to use our industrial strength, where does that leave us.

"I don't want to lose a day's wage - I want an effective strike that means we get around the table. Minimum service levels would make it longer. It would give the bosses the strength to try to mpose things on us, and would just lengthen a strike

"Some of the MPs need to look at themselves. What minimum service do they give us? Matt Hancock is off to the jungle, but will vote that we can't go on strike

"All unions should wake up and realise we have to stand together and fight - we'll be stronger and we'll achieve more. I don't care if you call it a 'national' strike or 'coordinated'. Let's have a proper strike, every union the same day. RMT BRANCH SECRETARY

'Candidates against those who are against us'

"We're always making the call for a general strike, and that's what's needed. Various laws are in place to make that difficult, but if there are disputes it needs to be spread. We need common ground. For example, for us (in London Underground) they want to put our pension into the local government fund. We should be lining up with people in it and others being forced into it, to all fight together for better. If our current pension scheme is the best, we need to get other workers into it. Find common ground. And till then coordinate. Get as many of the current disputes as possible to strike on the same day.

"In Keir Starmer we have a knight of the realm at the head of the Labour Party. We have a party, which is likely to be the next government, which is the status quo. Tory with a red rosette.

"We need to lay it out. What are our demands of Labour? What are his policies, how do they fit with our aspirations? What are his real intentions regarding the anti-trade union laws? So the call for a general election needs to be considered carefully. There should be candidates against those who work against the interests of trade unionists and working people. People like Sam Tarry and Jeremy Corbyn should stand.

BRANCH: CHAIR 2023 RMT NATIONAL BLACK AND ETHNIC MINORITY CONFERENCE

6677

socialism.

so many socialists.

Tom Hunt, NHS worker

I am campaigning for a 'yes' vote in the Unison

make ends meet in the NHS, with some working

all the overtime they can, taking second jobs,

and even using food banks to put food on their

tables and a roof over their heads. This has to

I am attending Socialism 2022 to gain further

understanding of why and how the capitalist

system can be overthrown and replaced with

As a returner to this amazing event, I cannot

over emphasise the sense of comradeship and

political understanding I gain from being among

I am really looking forward to Socialism 2022.

We are currently fighting for the future of the

As an active trade unionist and socialist, the

presented in a practical and accessible way.

Socialism event is the only one I've ever been to

where you can hear about the ideas of socialism

rail industry, and for all of our jobs.

Only socialism is capable of providing the

change everyone needs while offering a

sustainable way to save the planet.

NHS pay ballot. I've lost count of how many

people I've spoken to who are struggling to

Children's social care 'staring down the barrel'

GLYNN DOHERTY

Children's social care services are "staring down the barrel of a very difficult winter", according to Steve Crocker, president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services

Crocker, who earlier this year used his inaugural presidential speech to demand something be done to stop profiteering in the sector, says councils will need an extra three quarters of a billion pounds just to stand still. With the new prime minister and chancellor planning further swingeing cuts to council budgets, services face a deepening crisis.

A recent ADCS report says there are 32,000 young people aged 19-21 who had previously been in care supported by local authorities, a 22% increase in just seven years. An estimated 2.77 million initial contacts were received by children's services in 2021-22 - a 10% increase from two

Again, Crocker returned to the theme of profiteering, saying the "elephant in the room" was providers earning significant profits from a statutory service.

How can this be challenged?

Pressure must be maintained on central government by the trade unions and campaign groups, especially given the weak and divided state of the Tory party. But local authorities, with their significant reserves and ability to borrow money, could really pile on the pressure by setting people's budgets based on what is needed to protect and increase essential services – and demanding the money from

illors must fight

We need councillors prepared to fight for what is desperately needed in our communities. Councillors who refuse to implement further austerity, rejecting tax increases, rent or other charges for workingclass people, and opposing the privatisation of council jobs and services, including in children's so-

That campaign is not going to come from the Labour Party, with Angela Rayner again signalling how comfortable it is with "the filthy rich", no doubt including the social care profiteers. It will come from the grassroots campaigns and the trade unions. And it must mean those organisations standing their own candidates in next year's local elections.

Resist Tory council funding horror hole

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BRANCH SECRETARY CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY

recent press release from public sector union Unison highlighted that councils across Wales face a collective funding gap of over £200 million in the next financial year. But this figure is likely to be a gross underestimate after Jeremy Hunt gives his fiscal statement on 17 November.

According to the Daily Telegraph, he is going to fill what the BBC estimates is a £50 billion budget shortfall with a combination of tax increases and cuts to public spending. These cuts, coming as they do after over a decade of Tory austerity, will devastate council services, jobs and lives.

This is horror without end for council workers, who worked through the pandemic at significant risk to keep vital but already depleted services running. They have then been hit, like other working-class people, with the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. Now its Tory austerity mark two.

Council funding has been in crisis since the Con-Dem government's austerity starting in 2010. By October 2021, the Guardian was reporting that 25 local authorities were on the verge of receiving S114 notices (technically bankrupt) with three councils - Slough, Northampton and Croydon going through this process.

Rising inflation and increased demand makes the situation now even more bleak. While it has so far been English councils going over the brink, the situation for councils in Wales is little better, despite us having a Labour Welsh Government for over twenty years.

The harsh reality is that the Welsh

The local government **budget hole across England. Scotland and** Wales is £3.19 billion



(as in the case of Carmarthenshire), have put up very little resistance to these attacks on working-class people and the public services we use. As a result, the Tories will see councils as fair game for major cuts.

But we can end the horror - we can defeat these attacks. We call on the Welsh Labour Government to refuse to do the Tories' dirty work. It should set a 'no cuts' budget, including properly financing local government and the NHS, and then call on councils to do likewise. It should call on councils and the trade unions for support in mobilising a mass campaign to stop the cuts. This would get tremendous support from working-class communities across Wales.

The Tories, faced with such mass opposition to austerity and the current strike wave of trade unions

have been many times, and be forced into calling a general election What we need, in the Welsh Gov-

10-16 November 2022

ernment and in local councils, is leaders who are prepared to fight the cuts, not just bemoan them and then effectively do nothing to oppose This is an edited version of a

press release from Carmarthenshire

CAN YOU FIGHT THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN **ELECTIONS?**

SOCIALISM 2022

planning of the energy industry would ensure it is efficiently run to meet people's needs, not to line the pockets of the rich while ordinary

Unfortunately there is no estab-

paigns for trade unions and socialists across the country to take steps towards forming a new mass workers party, one which fights for these ideas and for the socialist transformation of society to put an end to this profiteering capitalist system.



the **Socialist**

Socialism is the event every year that recharges my batteries. Getting together with other socialists, lively discussion and debate on a whole range of issues - there's something for everyone. But this year is so important: the degradation of politics, the lack of a mass working-class political alternative, but workers moving into concerted action, reclaiming what is rightfully ours.

Why I'm coming to SOCIALISM 2022

Our ideas are the key to success. If you are a socialist and want an alternative system, come and discuss, debate and join us at Socialism

Marion Lloyd, PCS BEIS President (personal capacity)



I'm attending Socialism to discuss with others the key issues affecting workers today, especially with the rising cost of living. But I will also be bringing my newborn - an early and essential education for a young socialist!

Mary Summers, Trade union organiser



Food and fuel banks, even the last resorts are running out of funds due to the cost-of-living crisis. Capitalism offers no way out, we need a system change. That's why I am going to Socialism 2022

Isabel Grant, Unite



Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 November, Queen Mary University, London

I'm attending Socialism 2022 because, as a striking railway worker, this annual event always proves to be an invaluable experience. It brings together some of the most militant and fighting elements of the workers' movement, to debate and discuss the necessary political ideas needed to bring separate industrial disputes into coordinated national action, with workingclass voices right at its centre.

Kris O'Sullivan, ASLEF Birmingham 141



This Socialism event brings together workingclass people to discuss and learn about socialist ideas. The discussion will cover how we are rising against austerity policies and to change the system all over the world.

Lawanya Chandra, Unite member in service industry



Bulb buyout open the

CALLUM JOYCE

Energy recently announced a deal to buy competitor Bulb Energy from the government for between £100 and £200 million. This comes after Ofgem, the government department responsible for regulating the UK's energy industry, took control of Bulb when it ran into financial difficulties

The size of the state bailout has so far reached an estimated £2 billion. But it is not known what the value of Bulb, which currently supplies energy to around 1.5 million people, is. The government and Octopus have declined to publish the details.

But we have the right to know

where taxpayers' money, much of it taken from the working class, has been going. Ofgem must open Bulb's Gas and electricity supplier Octopus books to the public and allow the trade unions and those affected by the sale to examine its finances.

Despite Octopus's slick design and branding, intended to suggest that it is the most environmentally conscious of the energy companies, the company fundamentally exists to generate profits for its shareholders. t would not have gone ahead with the purchase if it did not see significant financial gain in doing so.

Did Octopus really pay full value. or have the government effectively handed the company back to the private sector after a huge amount of public spending, as they did with the

The government bailouts demonstrate the failures of the capitalist market. Squeezed for every drop of profit, charging sky-high prices and paying staff low wages, privately owned energy companies have been unable to withstand economic

Temporary nationalisation, before selling companies back to the private sector, offers no long-term solution. Companies remain vulnerable to future shocks, and continue to extract profits by hiking prices and squeezing wages.

To start to deal with the cost-of-living crisis we need full nationalisation of the energy companies under democratic control by the trade unions, the employees of these companies, and consumers. Democratic socialist

people freeze in their own homes.

lishment party that is prepared to fight for these ideas. Talk of nationalisation is anothema to free-market Tory politicians, and Labour leader Keir Starmer has categorically ruled out the idea of nationalising energy under a Labour government. That is why the Socialist Party cam-

COP27: Capitalism accelerates us down the highway to climate hell the event in Egypt saying: "We can : 1.5C is "woefully inadequate". Sav-

"We are on a highway to climate hell, with our foot still on the accelerator". These are the words of UN chief. António Guterres. The reality for many, like the over 2 million people left homeless after floods in Pakistan this year, is that the destination has already been reached.

Ted Woodley, RMT member

World leaders are assembling in Egypt to spout soundbites and cynically try to show off their green credentials. Rishi Sunak, having initially snubbed the conference, arrived at ing the global temperature rise to tive advantage in pursuit of profit.

bequeath our children a greener planet and a more prosperous

This from the head of a government that is about to announce further austerity, will oversee the reopening of coal-fired power stations, and will grant further licenses for North Sea gas and oil extraction.

A year on from the COP26 summit in Glasgow, progress towards limit-

ing the planet from climate disaster requires huge investment and an enormous transformation in how energy is produced and distributed. The hugely profitable and influential fossil fuel giants are unwilling to forego their profits; the banks are in on it too. The world's capitalist governments are unwilling to challenge them. As economic crisis deepens, rival capitalists fight for a competi-

sources needed to stop and reverse global heating is there, but in the wrong hands. By nationalising the energy companies and banks, along with other major industries, that wealth could be put to good use. On the basis of genuine international collaboration, only possible with socialism, a democratic socialist plan could use the knowledge and experience of the working class to transform the world - ending climate

disaster and improving workers' living standards internationally



For maximum unity not division

Statement by Socialist Party members on Unison's national executive council and local government service group executive, and the National Education Union's national executive.

workers in education and health are balloting for national strike action in their fight for a decent pay rise, which could see the biggest public sector strike since 2011.

This action could also be a springboard for united public sector action to defeat the new round of austerity proposed by the Tories, with around £40 billion of cuts being drawn up by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt.

A campaign to defeat this will need the maximum unity of unions across all the public sector.

School ballots

The National Education Union (NEII) has begun a ballot of its 450.000 members, having just delivered its biggest ever indicative vote for strike

With other teaching unions NAS-UWT and NAHT also balloting, this could see every school in England and Wales shut in the new year if the government refuses to move on pay and school funding.

Unfortunately, Unison and GMB members voted to accept the NJC pay award for their school support staff and local government members, because their respective leaderships did not campaign to reject the employer's offer, in contrast to other unions that did.

In those areas where Unison branches made a strong call and campaigned for rejection, there were big votes for action. This shows that on the ground there is little difference

ver one million public sector ; among school support staff, who ; in action to fight on pay, job cuts or want a fight on pay but need a fighting union to organise them.

There is now a real danger that instead of Unison preparing a fighting: their school are taking action for the strategy on pay and the real threat of further job losses alongside other workers, as it is doing in the health service, in schools it is creating work-

No to workplace division

The Unison leadership has complained to the TUC, alleging the NEU has broken a TUC agreement, because they have "written to the secretary of state in England demanding that there is adequate funding to fund the pay rises for teachers and support staff", and "issued leaflets and posters which explicitly encouraged school support staff to join the

It is the case that the NEU general secretaries did sign an agreement with the TUC not to actively recruit support staff, nor seek recognition in the NIC pay talks.

The NEU says that it has abided by

That doesn't stop workers choosing a union that they perceive to be the best fighter for their interests in any workplace, whether they are recognised for bargaining purposes or not. The NEU has gained 20,000 new support staff members since its formation.

A formal agreement between general secretaries, whether it is brokered by the TUC or not, will not prevent NEU school support staff members demanding to be included

improvements to their working lives.

This will especially be the case when teachers in their union and in same things. It will also not stop NEU activists demanding the NEU leadership ends the formal agreement with Unison and the other NJC trade unions and seeks NIC recognition.

When workers are fighting to defeat the the Tory government they rightly deserve the maximum unity from all trade unions. That is why many Unison and NEU members will be shocked to hear that the Unison leadership is risking workers' unity in the workplace. The Unison leadership has not

only complained to the TÛC alleging that the NEU has broken this TUC agreement, but it has asked all its branches to write to every employer stating that they are suspending cooperation with the NEU. Given the massive school cuts that

are looming, it would be a serious mistake to threaten the united front that will be needed by education unions to face down the Tories' austerity offensive. The headteachers' union NAHT, has announced it will be organising a national industrial action ballot over pay and school funding.

Instead of taking measures against the NEU. Unison members would want to see a major campaign of action for funding our schools to cover our pay rise.

We need maximum unity not division. If not, the failure to organise a

Sunderland Stagecoach strikers out



PHOTOS: SOCIALIST PARTY SCOTI AND AND LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY



fight on all the key issues school support staff face could backfire. Therefore, we call on Unison to

withdraw the letter. We appeal to both unions that a joint meeting of Unison and NEU

NEC and sectoral executives be urgently set up to resolve the issues. Unison should give its full support to

the NEU's fight for its members, as well as approach all the public sector unions to draw up plans for a united fight against the new round of austerity.

 The following support this statement in a personal capacity:

Unison NEC members: April Ashley, Naomi Byron, Iim Mc-Farlane, Hugo Pierre Unison Local Government SGE members:

Mark Evans, Angela Waller **NEU NEC members:**

Sheila Caffrey, Louise Cuffaro, Nicky Downes, Sean McCauley, Steve Scott

NHS historic strike plans

MICHELLE JARRETT-RUECROFT

he Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has announced a historic intention to take national strike action - the first ever in the RCN's history. The Torysupporting media are on the attack. They are already reporting hugely inflated 'average nurse salaries' in an effort to sway public opinion and misrepresent nurses as being greedy.

10-16 November 2022

What they are not reporting is that this is not just about pay. It is primarily about patient safety and reduced staffing levels, which is a direct result of pay restraint since the Tory-Lib Dem coalition came to power in 2010. The financial crash saw all staff on Agenda for Change (AfC) within the NHS face a pay freeze in the name of austerity, followed by a prolonged 1% cap.

The bursary for student nurses was also scrapped, which results in nurses qualifying from a three-year degree course with approximately

£70,000 of debt. The starting wage for a newly qualified nurse on Band 5 of AfC is £27,055, rising to £32,934 after five years. How will this attract new nurses into the profession and alleviate the pressure current staff are under?

the **Socialist**

Most qualified nurses stay at Band 5. However, even those that progress to Band 7 earn a maximum of £47.672. These nurses have completed extra training, possess advanced skills, and take on extra responsibility. Matrons and advanced nurse practitioners/advanced care practitioners require masters degrees and at Band 8a earn between £48,526 This is all part of the Tory plan to

decimate the NHS and complete their privatisation plan. We must support the staff on the ground who are saying enough is enough. All they ask for is a fair wage for the highly complex skills and responsibility they have, in order to attract new personnel into the service. It is our NHS we must fight for it.



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RCN vote gives boost in other unions

STRIKE WAVE

UNISON HEALTH SERVICE GROUP EXECUTIVE, PERSONAL CAPACITY

The RCN vote is a significant signal to the government that NHS staff are determined to press for an above-inflation pay rise. It reflects the anger among staff following the imposed rise of 4% on average, or a flat rate of £1,400. The RCN previously had a no-strike rule!

NHS pay has fallen by 20% since the Tories came to power in 2010 and the RCN is calling for a rise of 5% above inflation. All health unions are calling for a significant pay rise above inflation.

Unison is also balloting over the next few weeks, and this result should inspire members and those campaigning for a 'ves' vote.

Unison activists will be visiting workplaces and contacting members to ensure ballots are returned, and recommending a 'yes' vote for industrial action.

Both unions have a disaggregated ballot, so any industrial action called will be on an em ployer or NHS trust basis.

The union leaderships need to coordinate any industrial action and link up with other unions across the public sector.

The RCN says industrial action could take place before Christmas. As it is unlikely other unions will be ready until January, it is also vital that there are discussions on coordinated action

pay rise. In order to achieve this, the

employers must totally withdraw

their plans to decimate the indus-

try. They plan to close thousands of

booking offices, to unilaterally re-

organise and regrade our jobs, and

to hold down our pay, while con-

tinuing to pay out dividends and

So far, we have taken several days

So it is concerning that by calling

of national industrial action, and we

off the action for two weeks for talks

we have in effect suspended all strike

action for a minimum of four weeks

give two weeks' notice for any future

due to the legal requirement for us to

But now that the decision has

been taken, let's hope that we are

able to extract some significant

If, on the other hand, it appears

that the talks were simply an attempt

by the employers to demobilise ou

members, stall us, and even to sabo-

tage our re-ballot, we must prepare

to call further strike action as soon as

were about to ramp it up.

strike action.

concessions.

bonuses to shareholders and senior

Royal Mail and CWU in talks We must keep the pressure on!

SOCIALIST PARTY MEMBERS IN CWU

cation Workers Union (CWU) have produced a joint statement in an attempt to reach an agreement over their long-running dispute, in which Royal Mail bosses are attempting to smash the CWU and take the company into the gig economy, similar to Hermes

It's clear that over the last few weeks senior Royal Mail management have been trying 'shock and awe' tactics to attempt to intimidate the union and our members.

award, which was nothing but a massive wage cut. They also intended to move forward with 10,000 job losses. This included ripping up the agreed redundancy process and terms, ending 'no compulsory redundancies' and reducing redundancy pay.

Royal Mail has now agreed to suspend its plans to start briefing our members, including one-to-one meetings with workers.

to the date that Royal Mail is due to release its latest financial statement. While we recognise this is not a

final agreement, these developments are a clear sign that members' action can force Royal Mail back. But we must remain vigilant. We must keep the pressure on. The CWU has suspended plans for

a workplace ballot on Royal Mail's proposed offer, and a vote of no confidence in the CEO, but it has kept the two 48-hour strikes around Black Friday and Cyber Monday live. It's clear that after the CWU leader-

ship suspended the strikes planned for 12 and 14 November, the union membership is adamant that the pressure has to be maintained or Roval Mail management. We have to set our stall out. Before

any redundancies happen, we must demand that the financial books are open completely for trade union inspection. We don't accept that the changes

which senior management and the shareholders want are necessary or inevitable. Their aim is making money for shareholders at the expense of our members, rather than providing a vital public service.

We must demand that Royal Mail is brought back into public ownership and that the current board should be removed and replaced with workers who clearly know how to run a real public service.

Get all the latest union news

RMT in rail talks **Prepare to ramp up the**



PCS ballot and BEIS

on Thursday 10 November and PCS

members will report in the Socialist

Another civil service union, Pros-

announced five days of strike action.

cleaners, security guards, reception

and health and safety.

workers, post and portering staff

Solidarity to these hard-working

members. Bring these services back

in-house, and give them parity with

Caterers employed by Aramark, and

strike

next week.

action on the railways, after an offer of talks from the rail employers. There are mixed feelings about the

decision among our members across Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies (TOCs). There is disappointment among

leading Network Rail reps, who we understand demanded that the action remain on. The decision to call off strike action

should never be taken lightly. The national PCS ballot has now After such a monumental effort by finished. Results will be announced

our reps and activists to build for the week-long period of action across Network Rail and the TOCs, we need to know exactly what, if anything, has been conceded by the bosses.

pect, is carrying out an indicative Unfortunately, at the time of writing, it appears that little has, apart ballot of members, until 5 December. In the meantime, PCS members in from the offer of 'unconditional the Department of Business, Energy talks. and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have

The central theme of the dispute has been to secure our jobs and conditions, and to win a substantial

employed by ISS, will strike over pay, Marion Lloyd, BEIS group president, said: "Yet again our lowestpaid members are leading the way.

RMT London strike

A day of strike action by RMT members on London Underground and London Overground going ahead on Thursday 10

Khan is overseeing the decimation of jobs and pensions by Transport for London, wielding the Tories' axe for them, as hundreds of mil-

Midland Metro workers strike back

BLACK COUNTRY SOCIALIST PARTY MEMBERS

As some of the lower-paid workers in the industry, it's no surprise that after 23 years of operation Unite members at Midland Metro Ltd (MML) have finally had enough, and are part-way through 53 days of strike action.

The company has been happy to pay controllers and instructors to run a skeleton service on strike days, without conductors to take fares and ensure passenger safety. If it's good enough for these higher

grades on £35,000 to drive a tram during the day time, surely £27,000 is good enough for full-time drivers doing early and late duties? Despite support for the strike from

across the workers' movement. La-

bour councillors in Birmingham.

Wolverhampton and Sandwell have been largely silent. Could it be that they are embarrassed at the fact that it's a Labour councillor, Birmingham's Ian Ward,

ity (WMCA), while its subsidiary company MML pays metro workers low wages for intolerable shift patterns? This is the same Ian Ward who

was involved in attempts to fire and rehire Unite members working on Birmingham's bin lorries five years ago, before being forced back by determined strike action. Labour councillors make up a majority of WMCA's transport committee - the buck stops with them as much as with Tory mayor Andy Street and MML managers.

Unite should use this leverage to apply pressure. No money from Unite members' dues should go to support campaigning by the councillors concerned while this dispute is

This same approach helped secure an inflation-busting pay rise for bin lorry drivers in Coventry, after the Labour council attempted to smash who heads up transport for the : the unior

in droves West Midlands Combined Author-DAN GEORGE TYNESIDE SOCIALIST PARTY

> GMB Stagecoach strikers in Sunderland are out on the picket lines in droves. When we visited, they welcomed support from Geordies from Tyneside, Strike-breaking drivers, mostly from management, were called out for what they were - scabs - as each bus pulled up to the stop. Spirits were high

The strike has been called because Stagecoach Northeast offered a 4% pay increase, with an additional 2% later in the year.

Meanwhile, the CEO of Stagecoach. Martin Griffiths, has seen his greed in the post-Covid era. Many strikers spoke of their disillu-

pay rise from £900.000 in 2021 to £1,700,000 this year, while bus drivers have seen a real-term decrease. Another example of the runaway

the Labour Party. When we handed out our Socialist Party strike bulletin which had the headline 'Tories Out! one of the strikers commented in wasn't just the Tories that needed to

be out, it's the whole system of capi-

talism! We agree. Strikers told us that the GMB had originally offered to only strike between 10am and 3pm, but were dismissed by management. They also offered to go to shops for older people whose weekend may have been disrupted by the strikes.

Stuart Gilhespy, GMB organiser said: "The last thing Sunderland's bus drivers want to do is strike, but Stagecoach have backed them into a corner. They're refusing to negotiate and drivers are desperate. It's a shame management won't let members work during the rush-hour, so that families and children could get to work and school. But Stagecoach bosses seem hell-bent on causing as much misery to the people of Sunsionment with the rightward trend of : derland as they can

STOP PRESS

Universities to

The University and College Union (UCU) has announced national strike dates following its big strike mandate in its recent ballot.

70,000 members will strike in all the universities in the UK on 24, 25 and 30 November.

UCU general secretary Jo Grady calls for massive picket lines on 24 and 25, and then all to London for a UCU demonstration on Wednesday 30 November.



oval Mail and the Communi-

Last week, Royal Mail put a proposal to the CWU which was nothing more than a surrender document. The bosses were making plans to start briefing our members on changes over pay and terms and conditions.

These included a shocking pay

The membership's resolve has

forced management to agree a period of 'intensive' negotiations, due to end on 15 November, two days prior

SATURDAY 2.30-4.30PM

ARE WE HEADING FOR A

GENERAL STRIKE?

SPEAKER: ROB WILLIAMS

LESSONS FROM

THE CORBYN EXPERIENCE

SPEAKER: ISAI MARIJERLA :

SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL TREASURER

CENTURY

THE PERSON AND ADDRESS OF THE PARTY AND ADDRESS.

ZOOM

ACCESS

Saturday 19 & Sunday 20 November, The Graduate Building, Queen Mary University, Mile End Rd, Bethnal Green, London El 4NS

REGISTRATION OPEN FROM 9.30AM

THEME

2022 STRIKE WAVE

POLITICAL **VOICE FOR** WORKERS

HOW DO WE CHANGE THE WORLD?

TROTSKYISM

BRITAIN AND IRELAND

WORKING CLASS FIGHTING BACK

> IDEAS TO RESIST

INTRODUCTION TO MARXISM

STRUGGLE ACROSS THE WORLD

WOMEN'S LIBERATION & SOCIALISM

SATURDAY 11.30AM-1.30PM

ACCESS WHAT WAS BLAIRISM?

SPEAKER: JAMES IVENS - SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL

CAPITALISM AND THE CROWN

SPEAKER: SCOTT JONES-

THE SOCIALIST EDITORIAL TEAM

FASCISM AND

RIGHT-WING POPULISM

THE NUCLEAR

THREAT TODAY?

SPEAKER: BERKAY KARTAV .

SPEAKER: CLIVE HEEMSKERK

EDITOR OF SOCIALISM TODAY

LATIN AMERICA'S

PINK REVOLUTION' - WHERE IS IT AT?

SPEAKER: TONY SAUNOIS - COMMITTEE FOR A WORKERS'

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY

SOCIALIST PARTY LONDON ORGANISER



ACCESS

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SPEAKER: JOSH ASKER THE SOCIALIST EDITORIAL TEAM

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION - WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

SPEAKER: THEO SHARIEFF . SOCIALIST PARTY YOUTH & STUDENT ORGANISER

CONTRACTOR STREET

A SPECIAL CRISIS OF BRITISH CAPITALISM & TORY PARTY DISINTEGRATION

SPEAKER: HANNAH SELL -SOCIALIST PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY

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RACISM AND THE POLICE

SPEAKER: DEJI OLAYINKA FOCIALIST PARTY BLACK & ASIAN GROUP & CIVIL ACTIVIST

> **ENERGY BILL CRISIS AND** THE POLL TAX EXPERIENCE

SPEAKER: STEVE SCORE SOCIALIST PARTY EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL SECRETARY

MARXIST ECONOMICS - WHAT IS INFLATION & WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

> SPEAKER: HELEN PATTISON SOCIALIST PARTY LONDON REGIONAL SECRETARY

SRI LANKA CRISIS - WHAT IS THE REAL ALTERNATIVE?

SPEAKERS PRASAD WELIKUMBURA - KEY LEADER OF

ZOOM ROE VS WADE - THE FIGHT FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

ACCESS SPEAKERS: CHRISTINE THOMAS - SOCIALIST PARTY CUTIVE COMMITTEE & PEGGY WANG - US SOCIALIST

THE 1926 GENERAL STRIKE LESSONS FOR TODAY

SPEAKER: IAN PATTISON - THE SOCIALIST EDITORIAL TEAM

IS 'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH'

SPEAKER: CLIVE HEEMSKERK -EDITOR OF SOCIALISM TODAY

CAN A SUSTAINABLE SOCIALIST PLANNED ECONOMY COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE?

> SPEAKER: MARK BEST -SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE

WHAT'S THE ROLE OF A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY?

SPEAKER: DAVE REID . SOCIALIST PARTY WALES ORGANISER

IRELAND 1921 - A MARXIST VIEWPOINT ON THE MAKING OF A DIVIDED ISLAND

SPEAKERS: SEAMUS SMYTH - SP EAST MIDLANDS ORGANISER NIALL MULLHOLLAND - COMMITTEE FOR A WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

WHY ARE THE TORIES OBSESSED WITH ATTACKING TRANS RIGHTS?

SPEAKER: MICHAEL JOHNSON SOCIALIST PARTY LGBTQ+ MEMBERS' GROUP

STUDENTS. ANTI-SEMITISM AND SOCIALISM WHAT'S GOING ON ON CAMPUS?

PEAKERS: IAIN DALTON - SOCIALIST PARTY YORKSHIRE REGIONAL ECRETARY & ADAM POWELL-DAVIES - SOCIALIST PARTY YOUTH & STUDENT ORGANISER

> INTRODUCTION TO DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

SPEAKER: TOM BALDWIN SOCIALIST PARTY SOUTH WEST REGIONAL SECRETARY

WORLD RELATIONS AND THE DECLINE OF THE US SUPERPOWER

SPEAKER: LENNY SHAIL SOCIALIST PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

WOMEN IN THE TRADE UNIONS - A PROUD HISTORY OF STRUGGLE

ZOOM

ACCESS

SPEAKERS: HEATHER RAWLING - SP EAST MIDLANDS ORGANISES

SUNDAY 2-4PM

MARXISTS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

SPEAKER: ALEC THRAVES -SOCIALIST PARTY WALES ORGANISER

CAN YOU FIGHT THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN ELECTIONS?

SPEAKERS: DAVE NELLIST - FORMER 'MILITANT' LABOUR MP & FORMER SP COUNCILLOR & NICK CHAFFEY - SOCIALIST PARTY SOUTHERN & SOUTH EAST REGIONAL SECRETARY

IRAN - CAN THE PROTESTS DELIVER AN **IRANIAN REVOLUTION?**

SPEAKER; BOB LABI -COMMITTEE FOR A WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

WHAT WAS THE USSR? THE 'STATE CAPITALIST THEORY' REVISITED

SPEAKER: SARAH SACHS-ELDRIDGE -SOCIALIST PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

> SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL QUESTION

SPEAKER: PHILIP STOTT -NATIONAL SECRETARY OF SOCIALIST PARTY SCOTLAND

GIG ECONOMY - HOW WORKERS ARE FIGHTING BACK

SPEAKER: RYAN ALDRED + SOCIALIST PARTY SOUTH WEST REGIONAL ORGANISER

> NATIONALISATION AND WORKERS' POWER

SPEAKER: ALISTAIR TICE -SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE

> INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

ZOOM

ACCESS

ACCESS

SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE

UKRAINE-RUSSIA WAR - FIGHTING FOR WORKERS' UNITY TO END HORROR OF WAR

SPEAKER: JUDY BEISHON - COMMITTEE FOR A ZOOM

IARASSMENT & VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN - ITS ORIGINS & HOW TO FIGHT IT

SPEAKERS: CORINTHIA WARD - BIRMINGHAM NORTH SOCIALIST

RALLY 5.30-7.30PM. SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER. PEOPLE'S PALACE, QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY OF

> Speakers at the rally include: HANNAH SELL.

LONDON, MILE END RD, LONDON EI 4NS

Socialist Party general secretary PRASAD WELIKUMBURA.

a leader of the mass revolt in Sri Lanka

GARY CLARK

CWU Scotland No. 2 Branch Secretary (personal capacity)

SHEILA CAFFREY

NEU Executive Committee (personal capacity)

LEADING TRADE UNION ACTIVISTS FROM

RMT AND UNITE

Social: we will be gathering for a post-rally drink on Saturday evening at the Drapers Bar & Kitchen 17 Godward Square, Bethnal Green, London E1 4FZ

RALLY LIVE BROADCAST AND ZOOM ACCESS

Each of the 5 Saturday morning sessions and two sessions from each time slot will have zoom access for ticket holders who require it.

The Rally will also be live broadcast via Youtube for those unable to attend in person. Zoom links and YouTube premiere link will be sent to ticket holders in the week before the event

tickets & info: socialism.org.uk

MAJOR SOCIALIST BOOKSHOP ON SITE

Programme of 🛢 workshops can be

subject to changes

socialism@socialistparty.org.uk

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•

CAMPAIGNS 10-16 November 2022

Councillor standing for TUSC in Louth

I joined Labour under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership I identified with his principles of empathy, compassion, and desire to help those who needed it the most, to support workers, the disabled, the disadvantaged. His policies resonated with me, but then came Keir Starmer. His promise to unite us became an obvious ploy to become leader, then came the expul-

purge of left-wing members. The final straw came when Sir Keir Starmer accepted a Tory MP into the Labour ranks. How can someone go from a party so right-wing to a supposed left-wing party? Then the penny dropped.

sions, the flimsy allegations, and the

I couldn't stay any longer, and while I respected other local Labour: braved the shocking weather on the members' desire to stay in the hope

that the left wing would experience a : It's given me hope from conversa resurgence, in my heart I knew that hope was futile

I was politically homeless, until I found the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC). Suddenly all my political principles were there and it was a no-brainer to join the cause. I had a voice again, I could fight for the working class, the disability groups which I am passionate about and advocate for. With the cost-of-living crisis and

the mounting hatred of the Tories, it seems the right time to put TUSC on the map in Louth. We organised a public meeting on 3 November. I did a few media interviews, and we delivered 1,000 leaflets in my ward and the wider town. We engaged with many interested people and some ex-Labour Party members who night and now want to help TUSC.

tions that people are looking for an alternative; they understand we can't sit on our hands any longer. It's time to stand by our principles, be proud TUSC is part of that and I am proud to be part of TUSC.

In the May elections next year, 1 will stand for TUSC in the local town elections in my ward, that I am proud

• Visit tusc.org.uk for more and to get involved

LESSONS FROM THE CORBYN EXPERIENCE **SOCIALISM 2022** London, 19-20 Novembe tickets and info at socialism.org.ul

Fighting for socialism on campus

Liverpool

Last year, with an average of eight to ten people attending Socialist Students meetings, we showed solidarity on picket lines, and did campaign stalls. Speakers at our meetings included University and College Union (UCU), Unite the Union and the local trades union council.

This year, we have seen impressive growth. Our numbers have more than doubled, and enthusiasm is higher than ever.

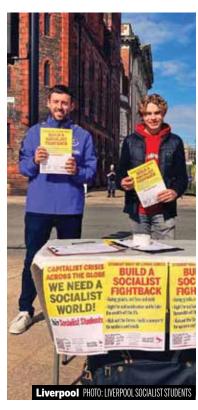
We have very interesting and complex conversations, and many Socialist Students members have attended local picket lines to show solidarity with the dockers and transport union RMT. Regular campaign stalls have raised the necessity of providing accessible late-night public transport via the Night Bus Campaign.

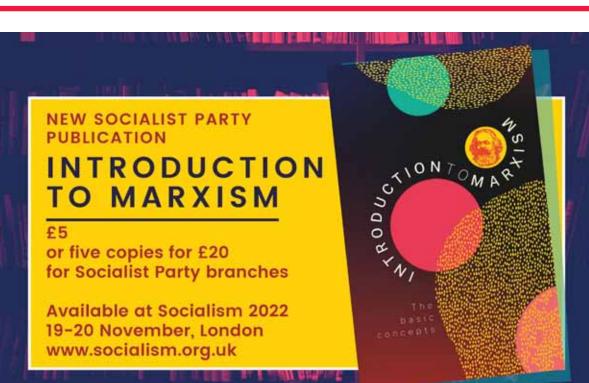
University of Arts

Socialist Students has been campaigning most weeks and spreading socialist ideas at many protests. There has been far more engagement than last year; students are more angry towards the Tory government and the capitalist system

There is an immensely strong desire for an alternative to the current system, and more students see socialism as this alternative. More students have been reaching out to us. looking to learn more about socialism, and getting involved in action on and off campus.

Capitalism is in crisis, students feel underrepresented and oppressed, and there is a blatant need for a so-





Fight Gateshead council's plan to close our leisure centres!



JOEL BYERS

SOUTH TYNE AND WEARSIDE SOCIALIST PARTY

As soaring food and energy prices hit the working class hard, and twelve vears of Conservative austerity have compounded problems in already deprived areas in the north east. Gateshead's Labour council has announced plans to close leisure centres in the Gateshead area, holding consultations over the next month.

The Tories have cut funding to Gateshead council by £179 million n the twelve years since they came o power, and plan to cut another £55 million over the next five years. The major shopping centre in the area (the Metro centre) ironically has a leaflet in its 'community hub space' saying: "The community hub is aligned with Gateshead council's : for TUSC in my area.

2030 vision strategy, encouraging and promoting healthy lifestyles for people in Gateshead and beyond."

Unlike prime minister Rishi Sunak, the people of Gateshead cannot afford their own personal pool. and rely on the public leisure centres for clubs and exercise. And in a time of high rates of obesity and mental health issues, the thought of losing these vital services has turned frustration to anger at the Tory government, and the lack of opposition from Keir Starmer's Labour.

What we really need is a party for the working class, a party that will stand against any cuts to our public services, a party that will stand with working people fighting for their conditions and decent pay. That's why I will be standing as a candidate

Fighting bus cuts

The Tiger 7 bus was a route from Reading to a town called Fleet, an hourly service, including on Sundays. But Reading Buses, owned and funded by Labour-run Reading council and Wokingham Borough Council. completely cut the service in January.

After we campaigned, the old route was partially brought back. But it's simply insufficient for people's

When this happened, the council said: "Use it or lose it". They set it up

Reading Buses also raised the fares. It now costs me £19 a week to get the bus to college. This is why we started a campaign

against this. The service must be fully restored, and bus fares should be

ADAM GII MAN

Peterborough

Bus services in my neck of the woods

face cuts. It is claimed that services are frequently almost empty.

goes to and from a business park on the city outskirts. The early morning buses tend to be full going out there and not-so-full going back, and vice versa at tea time. The route obviously provides a

function. It's difficult to see why it needs to be cut. It seems the answer is that the private operator demands that services have to be full both ways before they can operate them! Another service threatened with

the chop was introduced in the last year. It links new housing directly with the main hospital.

But this hourly service isn't early enough to transport staff to and from the main morning shift change, and it doesn't run much after 3pm either. So obviously services have been underused.

Protests by passengers and trade unions have now forced the local authority to retender all but one of the 18 routes. Funding for the services is only guaranteed until March. So the Socialist Party says that, instead public transport should be returned to public ownership and control, but with much more democratic management than under previous na-

Support workers' struggle in Sri Lanka

10-16 November 2022



The following is a model resolution to be passed at trade union meetings in support of workers fighting back in Sri Lanka as part of the mass movement against the cost-of-living crisis and repressive government.

THIS BRANCH/UNION NOTES:

Sri Lanka is facing the worst economic crisis in its history. The prices of essentials, food, and fuel has increased manifold. Mass struggle has erupted recently demanding improved conditions and the resignation of the corrupt government. A general strike - a Hartal - also took place supporting the demands of the masses. The dictatorial president, who is also accused of committing war crimes against Tamils, was forced to resign. However, the so-called 'new' government has refused to implement any changes or the demands of the mass movement. Instead, repression and attacks on democratic rights have intensified. The army is led by Shavendra Silva, who is named in a UN report as a war criminal and is now in control of the whole island, implementing repressive measures.

THE REPRESSIVE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT IS TRAMPI ING DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS:

Freedom of speech - opposition politicians, trade unionists, civil rights campaigners, and journalists continue to face repression, and severe restrictions remain in place on the media

Freedom of assembly - more and more places are put under police and military control prohibiting any gathering. All the protests are currently attacked and protesters arrested in each time

• Workers' rights - The Sri Lankan government is brutally anti-union. The workers' leaders are arrested and charged for simply protesting to defend workers conditions. Labour rights are under attack. The government is further taking actions to limit or stop trade union activities

• The right to a decent life - public services are being privatised, and workers' conditions are being attacked across the board. This will also facilitate the rapid commerciali-

climate of fear created by the government has restricted the political activities of Tamils, Muslims and hill country workers

the Socialist

THIS BRANCH RESOLVES: To affirm its solidarity with the

struggle of workers, students and vouth in Sri Lanka Support the movement for a peo-

ple's council in Sri Lanka To demand that the Sri Lankan

Allow all democratic rights including freedom of assembly, free

speech, and freedom for dissent Stop attacking the protests and arresting protesters

 To release all activists immedi ately, including Wasantha Mudalige, convenor of the student union, and others who are held. And drop all charges against the activists

Abolish the Prevention Terrorism Act (PTA)

To support the Ceylon Teachers Union (CTU), Independent Ceylon Teachers Union (ICTU) to produce a bulletin for its members

 To publicise the activity of Tamil Solidarity and other events organised by the Tamil community in defence of their rights

 To support the development of independent trade unions in Sri Lanka and to help monitor conditions in the workplaces

To forward this motion to regional/national bodies of our union as appropriate, and encourage them to support/affiliate as appropriate

a one-off donation. Cheques payable to: Tamil Solidarity (see tamilsolidarity.org for details) - contribution towards assisting the work of teachers union and other unions in Sri Lanka

WHAT WAY FORWARD FOR REVOLUTION IN SRI LANKA? **SOCIALISM 2022**

Socialism 2022 Help us ensure we have the funds to fight for socialism here and around the world

ocialism 2022 is taking place amid the biggest cost-of-living crisis faced by ordinary working-class and young people. A part of the event will be a financial appeal to raise funds to help build the Socialist

socialistparty.org.uk

The Socialist Party has consistently fought for the socialist transformation of society. Our members the street campaigning, and as part of the workers movement, raising socialist ideas that are needed to change the world.

This year, for example, in the face of numerous capitalist crises, we have consistently championed the building of working-class political representation. Others will bash the Tories and moan about Starmer - but we say what needs to be done! Our trade union members have

been battling within the unions for action for pay rises and better terms and conditions. And our party collectively offers ideas for the next steps forward for those strikes to win starting with coordinating the action. Students and young members have been doing campaign stalls on the cost-of-living crisis, and the need for a mass movement to end it.

Our weekly newspaper is an antidote to the idea that nothing can be done, and helps all those who read it to see that a socialist alternative is possible - and necessary. We defend the Marxist methods of perspective and programme. Our workplace workers - showing a glimpse of the huge potential power of the working

Our campaigns pages are full of fightbacks not seen in other newspapers. We are a party of the working class and our paper reflects that.

The international articles show the worldwide storm that's developing. We take our international work seriously - we support the Committee for a Workers' International, including financially. There isn't a single country that has a strong cap-Uprisings in Iran and Sri Lanka are the foretaste of the future. A third of the Socialism 2022 finance appeal will go towards helping build our

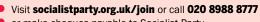
The Socialist Party is confident that

WORKPLACE

we have the ideas and a programme to fight for socialist ideas. Help us to also be financially prepared.

The cost-of-living crisis has his everyone and we are not immune to it. As inflation reaches a record high, the cost of everything is going up - the cost of paper, tins, materi als and electricity have doubled. But politically we cannot make cutbacks to our material, or the scale of our ntervention in events - we must in stead fight to increase the socialist please help us to ensure we have the financial means to point to how the working class can win the class strug

Fund the fightback DONATE TODAY



646 3,850 **17%**

or make cheques payable to Socialist Party,

656 1,850 462 2.300 Northern 750 165 1 200 14% 310 2,350 **13%** Southern and SW 289 2.600 London 4.600



Capitalism puts profit

before my eyesight

Socialist Party

exploitation of the majority of the world's population by a small, superrich elite who own most of the wealth and the means of producing it. This way of organising society, in which the pursuit of profit comes before everything else, causes poverty, inequality, environmental destruction, wars and oppression across the globe.

The Socialist Party organises workingclass people to fight against the attacks from this rotten system on our lives and livelihoods, and for a socialist alternative: a society which takes the wealth out of the hands of the super-rich and is democratically run by workingthe profits of a few.

Building fighting democratic trade unions in the workplaces and a new mass workers' party is a vital part of the struggle to change society along socialist lines

Because capitalism is a world system. the struggle for socialism must also be international. The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers' International which organises across the

WORK, PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

world. Our demands include:

- A £15-an-hour minimum wage for all, without exemptions. For the minimum wage to automatically increase linked to average earnings or inflation, whichever is higher.
- Share out the work. A maximum 32-hour working week with no loss of pay or worsening of conditions. The right to flexible working, under the control of workers not employers. An end to insecure working, for the right to full-time work for all who want it; ban zero-hour contracts.
- All workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness, parental and holiday rights from day one of employment. End bosses using bogus 'self-employment' as a means to avoid giving workers rights
- No to austerity through inflation. For all wage rates to be automatically increased at least in line with price rises
- Open the books of all companies cutting jobs or claiming they can't afford to pay a real living wage. State subsidies, where genuinely needed, for socially-useful small businesses.
- For trade unions independent of the capitalist state, with members having democratic control over their own policies, constitutions and democratic procedures. For all trade union officials to be regularly elected, subject to recall by their members and paid a worker's wage
- Reduce the state retirement and pension age to 55. For decent living pensions.
- Replace universal credit and the punitive benefit system with living benefits for all who need them.

PUBLIC SERVICES

 A massive expansion of public services including the NHS and council services. Reverse all the cuts, kick out the privateers. Bring private socia care and childcare facilities into public

- services for all who need them. Expand services for all women suffering violence For local councillors who are committed to opposing austerity and all cuts to local services, jobs, pay and conditions.
- For a socialist NHS to provide for everyone's health needs, including dental and eve care - free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out the private companies! Nationalise the pharmaceutical industry under democratic workers' control and management.
- Renationalise privatised utilities including rail, mail, water, telecoms and power - under democratic workers' control and management.
- Free, publicly funded and democratically run, good-quality education, available to all at any age. Abolish university tuition fees and write off student debt, end marketisation. and introduce a living grant. No to academisation. For all schools to be under the genuine democratic control of local education authorities, school staff, parents and student organisations.
- The right to a safe secure home for all. For the mass building of genuinely affordable, high-quality, carbon-neutral council housing. For rent controls that cap the level of rent. Fair rent decisions should be made by elected bodies of tenants, housing workers and representatives of trade unions. For cheap low-interest mortgages for home buyers. Nationalise the privately owned large building companies, land banks and estates

- Prioritising major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels and nuclear power with renewable energy, and ending the problems of early obsolescence - where products are designed to 'wear out' and be replaced - and unrecycled waste.
- companies, under democratic workers control and management, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need, in order to carry out a major switch to clean, green energy, without any loss of jobs, pay or conditions.
- A democratically planned, massively expanded, free to use, publicly owned transport system, as part of an overall
- plan against environmental pollution. For a major, publicly funded, insulation and energy transition plan for existing housing stock.
- Agribusiness to be taken into democratic public ownership. For a food processing and retail industry under are set by consumers, small farmers, and

Do you agree? Join the fightback!

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postcode to **07761 818 206**

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democratic community control and

- oversight of emergency funding resources. No to racist immigration laws. Expand democracy. For the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords For all MPs to be subject to the right of recall by their constituents at any time,
- For proportional representation and the right to vote at 16. For the right of nations to selfdetermination. For an independent socialist Scotland and for a socialist Wales, both part of a voluntary socialist confederation of Wales, England, Scotland and Ireland.

and to only receive a worker's wage.

- Oppose the dictatorship of the billionaire owners of the media. For the nationalisation of newspaper printing facilities, radio, TV and social media platforms. Access to these facilities should be under democratic control, with political parties' coverage being allocated in proportion to the popular vote at election
- For a new mass workers' party, based on the trade unions, and drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplaces, and community, environmental, anti-racist and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting, socialist political alternative to the pro-big business parties.

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extremely thick and heavy, so I have to have them ground down, so that they No the EU bosses' club. Organise a campaign with European socialists do not slide down my nose. Throughout the day, I literally flit between the and workers' organisations to use the talks on post-Brexit relations to tear up two to compensate for the complexity the EU pro-capitalist rules. For a real of what I can and cannot see. collaboration of the peoples of Europe I last had a new pair of glasses in 2016, at a cost of almost £500. This

JOSIE SHELLEY

sion needs

SOUTH EAST STAFFS SOCIALIST PARTY

It has become increasingly obvious

that, even though I am registered

blind, and therefore have a 'disabil-

ity, it is, in actual fact, capitalism that

has disabled me. From jobs that I

could once do now being obsolete,

to technology taking over, exploiting

I have very complex eyesight is

sues, which require a particular type

of lens. Because of the nature of my

eve condition, I wear bifocals, which

slightly enhance my distance vision,

and a very strong portion for close vi-

Because of this, the lenses would be

and hindering rather than helping.

year, I thought I would get a new pair, so that I would have a spare. To try and keep the cost down, I thought I would try a high-street chain, rather than the independent place that I usually use. I was apprehensive about the chain being able to fulfil my prescription. But they as-

sured me they could. After waiting nearly four months for the glasses to be made, they finally turned up. The chain optician has contracts with only a handful of manufacturers - the main one being : ist system

in the US. Hence the long wait. When I finally got the glasses back I could not see a thing through them I had to be very forceful and refuse to take them, until they finally admitted

my prescription. They had reduced the strength of the lens without telling me. They thought I would not notice. I got my money back

that they had not been able to fulfil

I went back to my usual independent optician. They sorted out a new prescription, and contacted the only manufacturers who could do it.

However, that company refused As it is so rare, they don't wish to invest as it was not worth it to them.

I am back to having just one, and apparently very rare, pair of glasses which I hope to goodness I don't break, or else I'm stuffed.

I could probably get by without them by utilising expensive technology. But I still have two eyes that I want to use. If it is possible to make this lens, then surely I should not be denied the chance to see?

While Covid has been used to jus tify the lack of suppliers etc, this is really just an excuse. What it came down to was a disinclination to do the work, because they could not make a profit.

A chance at enhanced vision should be a right, not a luxury. All optician services and manufacturers should be brought into public ownership under the NHS, and not left to the whims of a profit-hungry, capital-

Book review – Hunger Pains: **Book review**

CHESTERFIELD SOCIALIST PARTY

When I saw this book, the title said to me: "You must buy this". The one thing I can promise that you will become outraged reading it.

The author - Kayleigh Garthwaite a university researcher - spent 18 months as a food bank volunteer in Stockton-On-Tees. The book is packed with technical information. government policy towards the poor. personal interviews and case studies. A whole chapter is dedicated to in-

forming you how a food bank works. The whole book is an eye-opener, which deals with the old arguments of 'deserving' and 'undeserving'

The only words of encouragement throughout Hunger Pains is a short sentence saying that pensioners do not use food banks. Even this isn't true. A fifth of pensioners were in poverty before the inflation crisis hit

There is an urban myth that anyone just visits a food banks as an alternative to shopping at Tesco. The truth is that you have to have a red voucher from a Citizens Advice, a GP or similar professional, before you can obtain an emergency pack of food which is for three days.

Trussell Trust is very concerned that people will become dependent upon its service. In theory, a person or family is only allowed to use the food bank three times a year.

The root causes for the need to use food banks are poverty, low pay

en mental health, and contribute to other problems, like addiction. Tory policies for people on benefits mean severe delays and sanctions, leaving people without money for long peri ods of time.

It really beggars belief, as the interviews show. People work two or three jobs, and their earnings will still not stretch, after paying housing costs, to pay for food. The book also states. that there is a number, as large as the people who use food banks, who would rather starve than accept a red voucher, because of the stigma.

There would be no need for food banks, if we had socialism. The US has had food banks since 1967, and they are now regarded as an integral part of the welfare system there and in Canada. Food banks are here of stay for as long as we have capitalism. I bought the book, was informed

Hunger Pains is published by

by it, and everyone should read it.



Readers' opinion

Austerity – political choice not people's choice

MEI ANIE DENT

READING SOCIALIST PARTY

Under the Tories, working-class people have struggled financially, and we continue to do so. The levels of cuts to public services, including downscaling the NHS, is affecting most of the population. Inflation is at a record high, and pensions and benefits in Britain are considerably lower than the European average.

The number of deaths due to draconian benefit sanctions was high before the pandemic. And the shambolic handling of Covid has led to many thousands more completely unnecessary deaths.

Due to the cuts, outsourcing and privatisation of vital health services the future under capitalism looks bleak for ordinary people.

Greed is the Tory raison d'etre as they award bonuses to their billionaire donors and bail them out.

For the Tories' greedy billionaire donors, none of them will ever have to struggle and make essential

choices. Yet they expect us to. You'd think the billions in profit

that the rich make off the backs of the working class would be enough. Why should we pay for their mistakes? Working-class people, such as retail and health workers, brought us

through the pandemic. People like

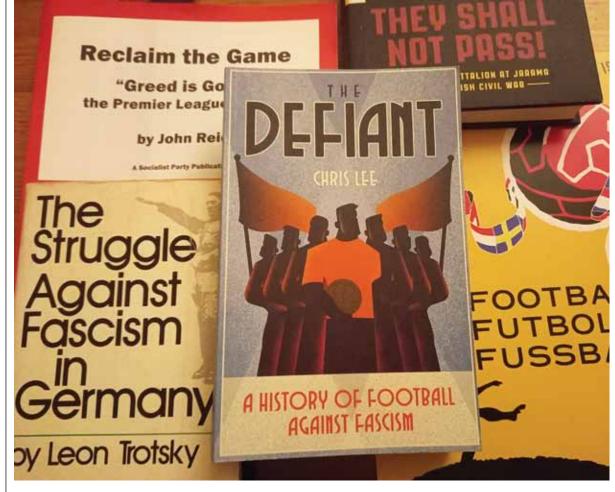
A lot of people are fed up with the way things are. Sick that the cost of everything has dramatically increased, yet wages, benefits and pensions have not. Many people won't survive this winter, choosing between heating and eating.

Apparently austerity is a political choice. It's certainly not the choice of ordinary people.

The Tories are in the process o imploding. They can't resolve the problems and crises that they have created. And they fully intend to make us pay for their poor decisions and inept governing.

We need a new mass workers' par ty. We need to stand up and say "no".

Life Inside Foodbank Britain | The Defiant – a history of football against fascism



SCOTT JONES

EAST LONDON SOCIALIST PARTY

The Defiant, with its cover inspired by a Republican Spanish Civil Warera poster, details the "history of football against fascism". It comes out to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Mussolini's 'March on Rome', when Mussolini came to power in Italy, leading the world's first fascist government (see '100 years since Mussolini's March on Rome' socialistparty.org.uk).

From the start, Mussolini both used and faced opposition from football, and that's where the book begins, looking at players who refused to give the fascist salute before matches in the new Serie A football league founded by Mussolini in 1929.

Author Chris Lee points out that the rise of fascism in the 1930s coincided with sporting events becoming truly international during the decade. Both the World Cup and Olympics were held in countries with fascist governments, in Italy in 1934, and Berlin in 1936, respectively.

Mussolini used the former as a propaganda tool and the Italians won on home soil. Hitler attempted to use the Berlin Olympics similarly. Although, on the field of play he was shown up by players refusing to give the Nazi salute and a defeat for Germany, and off it by teams leaving early in protest, like Peru after controversial refereeing.

Elsewhere, left-wing arranged a completely separate games in Barcelona (see 'Barcelona

1936: the people's Olympics' at socialistparty.org.uk), while others who did take part, like black American Jesse Owens, stuck two fingers up to the regime by winning gold medal after gold medal

But it was at the 1938 World Cup in France where things came to a head the last major tournament before World War Two. Matches involving Italy and Germany faced protests by anti-fascists and exiles from the countries. But there were also protests from Spaniards and supporters of the Spanish Republic, which was on the verge of being defeated and overthrown by a fascist uprising, including support from Germany and Italy. In some matches bottles were hurled from the stands.

The book looks at plenty of inspirational examples of football fans, players and clubs fighting fascism and the far right. From Spanish players who fought fascism in the civil war, to those who fought as resistance fighters and partisans from France to the Balkans in World War Two, with the match that inspired the film Escape to Victory in between.

The Defiant describes, probably for the first time in English, the role of Portuguese club Académica in the uprising in 1968 against rightwing dictator Salazar, which led to his downfall. The book also takes us through the pitched battles against far-right and neo-Nazi ultras in the 1970s and 80s, and those who took them on, to examples of anti-fascism in football across Europe and beyond

Football is political. The emer gence a few years ago in Britain of the far-right Football Lads Alliance and some recent high-profile examples of racist incidents, show the need to continue the fight against fascism and the far right in football and society.

13

This is done by winning football fans and working-class people to the need to reclaim our game and clubs as whole from the billionaires and transform society by fighting against the conditions and inequality of capitalism, which can sow the seeds of fascism, and for an alterna

- The Defiant by Chris Lee by Pitch Publishing is out now, available for £12.99
- Read more about the fight against the far right in football and a programme to transform the game 'Reclaim the Game' by John Reid, £5 from leftbooks.co.uk
- Read more about what the Socialist Party says about fascism see 'Global economic and political crises: Is fascism on the march?' at socialistparty.org.uk



socialistparty.org.uk the Socialist 10-16 November 2022



Anti-government protest in Sri Lanka on 13 April 2022 in front of the Presidential Secretariat ANTANO/CC

JOSH ASKER

SOCIALIST PARTY NATIONAL COMMITTEE

he heroic scenes of the Sri
Lankan masses storming Colombo's presidential palace,
bringing an end to hated president Gotabaya Rajapaksa's
rule, will have inspired millions of
workers globally who, like the Sri
Lankan masses, face spiralling prices
and shortages of goods.
The economic crisis fuelling the

The economic crisis fuelling the class anger of the Sri Lankan uprising was deepened further by the government's default on its foreign debts as foreign currency reserves emptied. The default has triggered warnings throughout the capitalist press that "Sri Lanka will not be the last country to have to choose between subsidising essentials and paying creditors".

Catalyst for uprising

The working class and poor of the so-called 'emerging markets', the majority of the world's population, face a huge crisis. The world faces deep instability, and popular uprisings like that of Sri Lanka. Debt is a major catalyst.

The Economist magazine identifies 53 nations with unsustainable or vulnerable debts – the "fragile 53". These nations include Ghana, Tunisia, Egypt and Pakistan. 60% of low-income countries, and 25% of emerging markets, are either in debt distress or at high risk of it.

Global debt continues to balloon and has reached \$300 trillion. 80% of new debt last year came from emerging markets.

But with inflation rising internationally, and central banks raising interest rates, the cost of servicing that debt is increasing. Even in more

developed capitalist countries this can precipitate crisis, as demonstrated by Truss and Kwarteng's brief disastrous time in office in Britain.

Poorer nations are in even deeper water. Typically, large proportions of investment come from capitalists based in the large imperialist nations. 90% of emerging market debt is in increasingly expensive US dollars. Under threat of economic turmoil, investors are most likely to roll back their foreign spending first.

Currency crisis

A loss of confidence in a nation's economy can see a currency's value plummet, reducing income from exports and increasing the price of imports. For workers and the poor this means more expensive goods or a lack of them, and less income from selling produce.

In 1997, the Asian financial crisis

In 1997, the Asian financial crisis was triggered when Thailand run out of foreign currency reserves and its currency collapsed. The crisis spread across the region, with general strikes developing and governments overthrown (see' When the capitalist bubble burst – 25 years since the Asian financial crisis' at socialistparty.org.uk).

25 years later, many of these nations' governments have built up larger foreign currency reserves than in the past, and typically have a more diverse set of creditors. The proportion of debt owed to private investors and China has increased.

Although not yet the size of the US economy, the Chinese economy has grown rapidly to roughly two thirds that of the US. China's investment overseas has grown too. The 'Belt and Road Initiative' is the name given to its investment portfolio based largely in developing economies.

An example is Sri Lanka's \$3.1billion Hambantota Port, financed by Chinese loans, and a cricket stadium in the same city widely regarded as a white elephant. These investments form part of a long list of infrastructure projects failing commercially, and contributing to what the Financial Times describes as China's "first overseas debt crisis". Belt and Road investments had reached \$838 billion by the end of 2021. China itself has a growing mountain of sovereign debt, as well as increasing levels of corporate and personal debt.

4477

Dealing with the debt crisis is another arena of growing inter-imperialist conflict, and the masses of the world's poorest nations will suffer

The rise of Chinese capitalism, and the move away from a 'unipolar' world, when US capitalism was by far the most dominant force, add complications to the process of agreeing debt restructures and bailouts. As the Economist put it: "The West does not want to give aid that flows into the pockets of Chinese creditors".

A \$2.9 billion IMF bailout package for Sri Lanka has been preliminarily agreed, subject to conditions, including agreements with the nation's creditors. Those negotiations will bring together representatives

of Chinese, Indian, Japanese and US capitalism – all rivals looking to advance their own economic interests in the region and on the island.

Dealing with the debt crisis is another arena of growing inter-imperialist conflict, and the masses of the world's poorest nations will suffer.

The inability to meet foreign debt payments, and the subsequent defaults, austerity-contingent renegotiations or bailouts, faces scores of nations. Inevitably, the economic devastation facing workers and the poor will bring popular uprisings.

Sri Lankan bailout conditions

In Sri Lanka, the mass movement grew into a force which swept aside a prime minister and president. But it has so far left the main capitalist institutions intact, and in the hands of the same capitalist class. The new president, who had previously served as prime minister numerous times, will lead a government negotiating a bailout. Its terms will inevitably demand more pain for the Sri Lankan masses.

No bailout deal will have terms which are acceptable to the workers and poor in Sri Lanka. That's why members of the United Socialist Party in Sri Lanka, the sister party of the Socialist Party, fight for the non-payment of the debt, as a key element of their socialist programme. A government of the workers and poor in Sri Lanka, refusing to pay the foreign debts racked up by the corrupt Rajapaksa regime, and refusing to pass the cost onto ordinary people, would win huge popular support nationally and internationally for its stand.

But it would face an onslaught from the capitalist class. The threat of domestic and foreign investment fleeing the country would need to be met with capital controls. And a state monopoly of foreign trade to enable working-class democratic control of what goods are imported and exported. Nationalisation of the banks and major industry, under democratic workers' control, would mean investment could be planned to meet the needs of ordinary people, not to serve debt payments.

Internationalism

An appeal from the masses of Sri Lanka, to the masses internationally facing a similar fate, and to the working class in their creditors' nations – including China and India, themselves with domestic debt crises – to join in a struggle against their own capitalist classes, would undermine attempts to isolate the movement.

In Sri Lanka, as elsewhere, a socialist political programme is necessary to save the masses from ruin. What is missing in most cases is a mass working-class political party, and an organised force conscious of the need for the working class to take political and economic power into their own hands. That is what the Committee for a Workers' International is striving to build internationally.



10-16 November 2022 the **Socialist** socialistparty.org.uk INTERNATIONAL

Israel general election: 'Lefts' wiped out in polls, as far right surges

COMMITTEE FOR A WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL

srael's general election, held on 1 November, and the fifth election in three years, saw the return of the corrupt, former prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to power. He is still facing trial on four corruption charges. The far-right Religious Zionist Party, whose deputy leader, Itamar Ben-Gvir, calls for the expulsion of "disloyal" Arabs, as well as left-wing Jews, and is an admirer of Baruch Goldstein - a Jewish terrorist who massacred 29 Muslim Palestinians while they were praying - is now the third largest party in the Knesset, with 14 seats.

With 90% of the votes counted, the anti-occupation Meretz party is on track to narrowly miss the electoral threshold of 3.25% and to lose all its Knesset seats. The radical Palestinian party, Balad, which recently broke away from the Communist-led 'Joint List, also appears to have failed to clear the threshold, thereby losing its MK (member of parliament). And the once mighty Israeli Labour Party, which ruled Israel for three decades, barely scraped into the Knesset winning only four seats - which is less than the Joint List.

This election represents a crushing defeat for the Israeli 'left', and shows their utter failure to offer a way out of the crisis in Israeli society.

Netanyahu returns to power just 16 months after he was ousted in the 2021 elections and replaced by the 'government of change'. That government, which had the backing of most of the Israeli capitalist class, was an unholy alliance, containing far-right settlers, the anti-occupation Meretz party, the Islamist United Arab List, the Israeli Labour Party, and Yair Lapid's centre party - disparate parties united only by their opposition to

Despite a large financial surplus, the outgoing government ended the Covid stimulus payments which kept many families and small businesses afloat. The government also waged a bloody bombing campaign in Gaza, and accelerated the building of settlements and the expropriation of Palestinian land in the West Bank, as well as the eviction of Palestinians from their homes in East Jerusalem and their replacement by far-right settlers.

All this was done by a government propped up by Meretz and the Labour Party, which were prepared to act as a fifth wheel in this repressive government, in the name of keeping Netanyahu out. When Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was assassinated by the Israeli Defence Force, and her funeral was brutally attacked by Israeli police, the minister responsible was Labour MK, Omer Bar Lev.

The Meretz party had always railed against the evils of the occupation while in opposition, but once in government their six MKs, time and again, have voted to maintain the



occupation regime. This has been done in the name of holding the coalition together and preventing the return of Netanyahu. In order to keep Netanyahu out, Meretz propped up a government that continued the racist and repressive policies which had been Netanyahu's hallmark

After the assassination of Shireen Abu Akleh, this contradiction became untenable, and Meretz's sole Arab MK, Ghaida Rinawie Zoabi, briefly resigned from the coalition. depriving it of its majority. The subsequent denunciation of Rinawie Zoabi by the Meretz leadership made it clear that, despite Meretz's egalitarian programme, Arab MKs role was to serve as a decoration, and were expected to do what they are told and vote for continued oppression of the Palestinians. Their decline to zero MKs in this election is the inevitable result of this record.

Netanyahu's Likud party is once again the largest in the Knesset, with 32 seats. But this represents only a quarter of the Knesset seats. Likud has maintained Trump-like rightpopulist support from the more downtrodden layers of the working class, who are aware that he is opposed by the majority of the capitalist establishment. But its share of the repressive laws which maintain the : vote is still significantly less than in

: the 1980s, when at one point Likud had 48 seats.

Many people are dismayed by the apid ascent of the ultra-right Religious Zionist Party. Once a fringe party, it has doubled its vote. Its programme is one of racist civil war and ethnic cleansing against the Palestinians, banning marriages between Jews and Muslims, and attacks on LGBTO+ rights.

The gun-toting Itamar Ben Gvir is a follower of the neo-fascist Meir Kahanah, and provides legal defence to Jewish terrorists who murder Palestinians. Ben Gvir was convicted for inciting racist hatred, and even the Israeli army, which is notorious for its racist oppression of Palestinians, refused to enlist him because of his extremist ideology. He has been prominent in the campaign to kick Palestinian families out of their homes in East Jerusalem and replace them by settler zealots.

His party won many votes from the mixed towns, where elements of inter-communal civil war erupted in May 2020, partially fermented by right-wing thugs from Ben Gvir's party. These mixed towns remain lowintensity war zones, and Ben Gvir capitalised on the fear among Jewish inhabitants of these neighbourhoods, offering the 'simple' solution

: of expelling their Arab neighbours.

The rise of this party, the political embodiment of distilled reaction, shows the enormous crisis in Israeli society, and the desperation of large layers of the population who are disaffected with the failed establishment parties and desperate for a way out of the crisis. These are the horrific dangers caused by the vacuum when there is no workers' party offering a socialist solution to the crisis.

The Israeli press calculate that Netanyahu now has enough support in the Knesset to form a stable coalition with Ben Gvir. But forming such a coalition will be pouring petrol onto the already smouldering embers of the national conflict with the Palestinians, both inside and outside Israel proper, as well as with the surrounding Middle East. Therefore, Netanyahu is likely to prefer a 'national unity' government with Yair Lapid or Benny Ganz's centre parties, using the spectre of an ultra-right coalition with Ben Gvir to extract the maximum leverage.

After years of parliamentary stalemate, these elections give Netanyahu's allies a clear five-seat majority - arithmetically enough to form a stable coalition. But Netanyahu's Likud party would be a minority within such a coalition, and subject to continuous blackmail by deranged right-wing fanatics. His five-seat coalition majority will not be enough to insulate him from the chronic instability of Israeli society, and his coalition will stagger from crisis to crisis and ultimately be torn to shreds.

International (CWI) is the international socialist organisation which the Socialist Party

> Israeli capitalism is in crisis. Its parties have nothing to offer the working class except permanent war, insecurity and economic misery. These parties can only build support by stirring up the most reactionary ideas of racism, ultra-nationalism, homophobia, and hatred of migrant workers. There is no way out under capitalism, and all parties which cling to the capitalist system will stagger from crisis to

> The only way out is the building of workers' parties, armed with a socialist programme, which can unite the working class on the basis of its common interests, and in that way end the nightmare of capitalism.



Issue 1202 Militar 10-16 November 2022

Workers, strikers...



Tickets and info socialism.org.uk



Come to SOCIALISM 2022

Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 November, Queen Mary University, London

SHEILA CAFFREY

NATIONAL EDUCATION UNION NATIONAL **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER (PERSONAL**

his year has been the largest movement in the trade unions that I can remember. Where the Tories thought they could put austerity back on the agenda, the working class has fought back.

National ballots of any trade union willing to put forward a lead are smashing the anti-trade union laws, with well over 50% of members voting to take action to win the pay and conditions they desperately need and deserve!

higher education have returned a ballot to strike - another 70,000 university staff joining the fightback.

And with a 20% pay cut in the last decade, and 25,000 leaving nursing in the last year, is it in any surprise that 300,000 nurses in the Royal College of Nursing have voted to take strike action?

Strike ballots

Ballot papers have gone out for over 800,000 education workers across three unions, including the head teachers' union. Civil servants in the PCS union have just finished a national ballot.

The Communication Workers In the last fortnight, more than Union and rail union RMT are in eight out of ten University and talks following massive national

College Union (UCU) members in : action, and RMT and Aslef are reballoting.

As a proud member of the National Education Union, I have returned my ballot paper to strike. I see the next step in the campaign as attending Socialism 2022. I look forward to mixing with hundreds of other socialists and workingclass fighters. To hear platform speakers and discuss questions in sessions, such as 'Are we heading for a general strike?' and many others.

It is becoming increasingly clear that capitalism doesn't have any answers to the problems facing working-class people. Ministers and prime ministers are in a revolving door in parliament, offering sticking plasters of £60 a month for energy

bills, while crying crocodile tears : that there's a £50 billion hole in public finances; a hole that they've created, awarding their cronies large public contracts!

New workers' party

The Starmer-led Labour Party has clearly shown it is no friend of the striking working class. Starmer banned shadow ministers from attending picket lines, and invited Royal Mail to Labour's national conference, at a time when Royal Mail bosses are tearing up terms and conditions for postal workers. They have clearly nailed their colours to the mast.

So, what is the answer? We need workers across unions coming to-gether against the bosses and the Tories. We need to fight for a new workers' party. And we need to fight for an alternative.

If we took profit out of the system, there'd be plenty of money for jobs, homes and services for all. If we took capitalist competition out of the system, then instead of a 'race to the bottom' decimating workers' pay and conditions, we could build well-paid, green industries. We need to fight for a socialist society, run by workers, in the interest of workers.

Where else will you be able to discuss the struggles, and leave energised to fight for a socialist future? If you've not yet checked the programme and bought your ticket, now is the time to do it, and attend the socialist event of the year!

